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ILLINOIS FUR HUNTER SURVEY, 1998-99

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**FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT
PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-8**

**JOB COMPLETION REPORT
ILLINOIS FOREST GAME HUNTER SURVEY: FUR HUNTERS, 1998-99
STUDY 101
JOB NUMBER 101:5**



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7 April 2000

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

WILDLIFE HARVEST AND HUNTER OPINION SURVEYS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT No. W-112-R-8

STUDY No. 101: Surveys of Hunters/Trappers Via Mail-Letter
Questionnaire

JOB NO. 101:5: Illinois Forest Game Hunter Survey: Fur Hunters,
1998-99

ABSTRACT: A systematic sample of 6,000 residents who purchased 1997 Illinois Habitat Stamps, and indicated on the stamp stub they had hunted furbearers the previous year, was surveyed following the 1998-99 season. The licensees were contacted by bulk rate postage (Address Service Requested) in 3 mailings. Questionnaires were delivered to 5,673 (94.6%) of the recipients, from which 3,371 useable replies were received (59.4% response). Of these, 1,974 (58.6%) were active fur hunters--i.e., spent ≥ 1 days afield hunting furbearers during the 1998-99 season. There was an estimated 26,992 active fur hunters statewide in 1998-99.

The survey included 6 hunted species: raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*). Findings are presented: (1) on a statewide basis for all 6 species, and (2) for raccoon and coyote, each of the 10 wildlife management units and 2 furbearer management zones in the state. The data include estimated number and density of active fur hunters, estimated number and density of furbearers harvested, and average season harvests.

Statewide estimates for number of active hunters and their harvest (in parentheses) were: raccoon 16,258 (335,565), opossum 1,764 (10,549), red fox 2,899 (2,435), coyote 16,162 (57,213), gray fox 834 (450), and striped skunk 328 (751). Hunters were afield an average of 19.9 days, and they sold an estimated 70.4% of their fur harvest. Nearly one-half (43.7%) of the hunters said they hunted nuisance or problem animals as a service to other people, and 16.3% indicated they used or sold meat or other products (excluding pelts) from furbearers. There was an average of 2.2 hunters per raccoon hunting party, and one-half (50.9%) of the raccoon hunters owned raccoon hounds (average of 2.3 hounds per owner). Although 65.0% of the hunters statewide pursued raccoons with hounds, 45.5% of the North Zone hunters hunted "on foot and using a light (without dogs or predator calls)". Coyote hunters averaged 3.3 hunters per party, and each party took an average of 10.7 coyotes.

Majorities of the active hunters thought the opening and closing dates for the raccoon hunting season were about right; the use of snares for land sets should remain illegal; and the raccoon, opossum, and coyote populations were up. Active fur hunters had hunted furbearers for an average of 19.8 years, and 45.4% subscribed to 1 or more fur hunting/trapping magazines or other outdoor publications.

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

WILDLIFE HARVEST AND HUNTER OPINION SURVEYS

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NO. W-112-R-8

STUDY 101: Surveys of Hunters/Trappers Via Mail-Letter
Questionnaire

JOB NO. 101.5: Illinois Forest Game Hunter Survey: Fur Hunters,
1998-99

OBJECTIVE: To survey 1 group of forest game (deer, turkey, squirrel, or other) hunters to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, activities, attitudes, and opinions in Illinois. Resident furbearer (6 species of mammals) hunters were selected for the 1998-99 season.

PROCEDURES: A systematic sample of residents who purchased 1997 Illinois Habitat Stamps, and indicated on the stamp stub they had hunted furbearers the previous year (Fig. 1), was surveyed following the 1998-99 season via mail-questionnaire. Each stamp stub included the name and address of the purchaser, and information on game species hunted the previous year. License vendors were instructed to return the stubs to the Department of Natural Resource's (DNR) Permit office in Springfield.

A 4-page, 22-question questionnaire was developed specifically for the 1998-99 Fur Hunter Survey (Fig. 2). This questionnaire, a letter of explanation (Figs. 3 and 4), and a return envelope (pre-addressed and postage-paid, first class) were mailed to the individuals on the mailing list. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 5 and 6) at approximately monthly intervals. Bulk rate postage (Address Service Requested) was used for sending out all 3 mailings.

Data from returned questionnaires were transferred to a computer file (Ashton-Tate dBASE IV) and analyzed using a statistical program (SPSS Inc., SPSS/PC+V 2.0). Respondents were classified as inactive - those who did not spend any time afield hunting furbearers in 1998-99, or active - those who spend ≥ 1 days afield hunting furbearers during the 1998-99 seasons.

Data for each species surveyed were compiled on a statewide basis, and for raccoon and coyote, for the 10 wildlife management units and 2 furbearer management zones in Illinois (Fig. 7). In addition, confidence limits at the 95% level were calculated by species for the number of active hunters, average season harvests, and total harvests on a statewide basis. The formulas used were described by Cochran (1953) and Snedecor and Cochran (1967). These are as follows:

- a. Number of active hunters for species:

$$\pm 2N \sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}$$

where N = total habitat stamp purchasers who hunted furbearers

n = number of fur hunters in sample

p = portion of fur hunters in sample who actively hunted species

$q = 1-p$

- b. Average season harvest per active hunter for species:

$$\pm 1.96 \frac{s_1}{\sqrt{n_1}}$$

where s_1 = standard deviation of average harvest per active trapper

n_1 = number of hunters in sample who actively hunted species

- c. Total harvest of species:

$$\pm 2N \times \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}$$

where s = standard deviation of average harvest of species by all fur hunters in sample

All calculations assumed there were no differences between the activities of the stamp purchasers who returned the questionnaire and those who did not.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

1998-99 Fur Hunting Seasons

The 1998-99 fur-bearing mammal hunting seasons are summarized in Table 1. The raccoon/opossum season extended for 75 days in both the North and South Zones, whereas the red fox/gray fox season was spread over 76 days. Except for being closed during the firearm deer season, coyote and striped skunk could be hunted year round. However, deer hunters with unfilled deer permits were permitted to take coyotes during the firearm deer season. There were no daily or seasonal bag limits for furbearer hunting in Illinois in 1998-99.

1998-99 Fur Hunter Mail Survey

The mailing list for this survey consisted of 6,000 systematically selected individuals who had purchased a 1997 Illinois Habitat Stamp and who indicated on the stamp stub they had hunted furbearers the previous year. The initial mailing of the questionnaire took place on 29 January 1999. The 2 follow-up mailings to non-respondents were made on 22 March and 29 April, respectively, and the mailings were closed out on 30 July 1999.

A total of 5,673 (94.6%) of the stamp purchasers in the sample were reached by the U.S. Postal Service. The 337 remaining questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. There were 3,371 useable replies from the stamp purchasers contacted, representing a 59.4% response for the number delivered. Of these respondents, 1,974 (58.6%) reported that they spend ≥ 1 days afield hunting furbearers during the 1998-99 season and were classified as active fur hunters. The other 1,397 respondents were inactive--i.e., did not hunt furbearers in 1998-99.

For all 3,371 respondents, 94.8% purchased a 1998 Illinois Resident Hunting License and 95.3% purchased a 1998 Illinois Habitat Stamp (Table 2). For the 1,974 active fur hunters, 97.9% purchased a resident hunting license and 98.0% purchased a habitat stamp. Only 11.0% of the active hunters purchased a 1998 Illinois Resident Trapping License.

From a total of 259,534 Illinois Habitat Stamps sold for the 1998-99 season, license vendors returned 177,480 stubs to the DNR's Permit Office. We systematically selected 1,972 of these stubs and tabulated the data they provided. In this sample, there were 1,878 residents, 205 of which indicated they had hunted furbearers the previous year. Among the 94 nonresidents there were 2 who identified themselves as fur hunters. Thus, 10.4% of the sample consisted of resident fur hunters. Based on these data, there was an estimated 26,992 active fur hunters in Illinois in 1998-99.

A. Number of Fur Hunters and Days Afield

The 26,992 active fur hunters in the state included an estimated 16,258 (60.2%) raccoon hunters and 16,162 (59.9%) coyote hunters (Table 3). There were 2,899 (10.7%) individuals identified as red fox hunters and 1,764 (6.5%) as opossum hunters. Gray fox hunters numbered 834 (3.1%) and striped skunk hunters 328 (1.2%). An estimated 697 (2.6%) individuals participated in canid chasing in Illinois in 1998-99.

Statewide, active raccoon hunters devoted an estimated 268,512 days afield to their sport in 1998-99 (Table 3). This represents 50.0% of all fur hunting activity for the entire season. Coyote hunters spent an estimated 202,755 days afield, or 37.8% of the total fur hunting effort. The remaining days afield were spent hunting opossum, red fox, gray fox, or striped skunk (9.6%), or canid chasing (2.6%). Distributions of the days spent afield among raccoon, red fox, gray fox, and coyote hunters, and by wild canid chasers, are presented in Figs. 8-12.

B. Hunter Fur Harvest Summary

Statewide harvest summaries for the 6 species of furbearers included in this survey are presented in Table 3. In addition to the number of active hunters and days afield for each species, the data include average season harvest per active hunter, estimated total hunter harvest, and estimated percent and total sold. Similar information for raccoon and coyote, plus densities of active hunters and harvests for these species, are provided by wildlife management unit in Tables 4 and 5. Statewide sample sizes for these data are presented in Table 6, which also provides the percentage of active hunters who pursued each species.

The 95% confidence intervals for number of active hunters, average season harvest per active hunter, and total harvest for each furbearer statewide are given in Table 7. In most instances, those species with the greater number of active hunters in the sample had smaller limits of variability which result in greater confidence in the projections. For example, active raccoon hunters were the most numerous in 1998-99 and their projected number varied by only $\pm 3.7\%$. The 95% confidence interval for less numerous red fox hunters varied by $\pm 13.0\%$ and for uncommon striped skunk hunters by $\pm 40.5\%$.

C. Distribution of Harvest Among Active Hunters

In terms of total harvest and average season harvest per active hunter, the raccoon was by far the #1 ranked furbearer species hunted in Illinois in 1998-99 (Table 3). The raccoon accounted for 335,565 (82.5%) of the estimated 406,936 furbearers

taken during the 1998-99 hunting season. The reported number of raccoons harvested by 1,189 active raccoon hunters ranged from 0 to 223 and averaged 20.6. For the entire season, 52.9% of these hunters harvested ≤ 10 raccoons and 73.8% harvested ≤ 25 (Table 8).

For the other hunted species, active hunters harvested an average of 6.0 opossums (range 0-92), 0.8 red fox (range 0-23), 3.5 coyotes (range 0-180), 0.5 gray fox (range 0-10), and 2.3 striped skunk (range 0-20). Two-thirds (64.4%) of the red fox hunters and over three-fourths (82.0%) of the gray fox hunters took 0 animals (Table 8). Similarly, >50% of the coyote and striped skunk hunters took 0 or 1 animal. For these 4 species, <15% of the active hunters made season harvests of >5 pelts. For active opossum hunters, 27.8% took >5 pelts during the 1998-99 season.

The above data emphasize the inapplicability of bag limits (both daily and seasonal) to furbearer hunting in Illinois. Few hunters are successful in making large seasonal harvests. The ones who do are active throughout the season over extensive areas. Reductions in season length offer the most potential for reducing the furbearer harvest by highly successful hunters. Bag limits could potentially increase harvests because of their goal-setting implications.

D. Management Zone Data for Raccoon and Coyote

Management zone and statewide data summaries for raccoon and coyote hunting during the 1998-99 season are presented in Tables 9 and 10. The data for each species include estimated number and density of active hunters, average season harvest, estimated total harvest, and harvest per unit area. The northern and southern zones listed for 1998-99 were nearly identical to the zones employed for regulatory management in previous years (1979-80 through 1997-98) (Fig. 7).

E. Pelts Sold

Active fur hunters sold an estimated 70.4% of their harvest during the 1998-99 season. The proportion of each species sold ranged from a low of 3.6% for striped skunk to a high of 81.0% for raccoon (Table 11). The fraction of pelts sold in Illinois and out-of-state also varied among species. Overall, 89.9% of the marketed portion of the fur hunter harvest was sold in Illinois and 10.1% out-of-state. In comparison, 72.3% of the fur hunter harvest was sold in 1992-93 (86.4% in Illinois and 13.6% out-of-state) (Anderson and Campbell 1994).

F. Other Uses of Furbearer Products

When asked whether they used or sold meat or other products from furbearers, 16.3% of the active hunters responded in the affirmative (Table 12). An estimated 15.0% of the hunters "used furbearer meat for other purposes (wild game dinner, etc.)". A smaller segment (4.8%) of hunters fed furbearer meat to pets. The hunters rarely sold furbearer meat (0.6%) or "furbearer products other than pelts or meat (i.e., scent glands, skulls, etc.)" (0.6%).

G. Hunting Nuisance/Problem Animals

A question on the questionnaire asked whether participants hunted nuisance or problem animals as a service to other people such as family, neighbors, or friends. The response by 43.7% (n=1,913) of the active fur hunters was "yes".

H. Characteristics of Raccoon Hunters

The results of this survey indicate there was an average of 2.2 hunters per raccoon hunting party, and that one-half (50.9%) of the raccoon hunters owned raccoon hounds, in Illinois in 1998-99 (Table 13). Hound ownership was much more prevalent in the South Zone (71.1%) than in the North Zone (38.6%). The hound owners averaged 2.3 hounds each. Not surprising, the majority (65.0%) of the hunters pursued raccoons with hounds. The practice of hunting with hounds was much more pervasive in the South Zone (87.3%) than in the North Zone (51.2%). Nearly one-half (45.5%) of the North Zone hunters pursued raccoons "on foot and using a light (without dogs or predator calls)".

About one-fourth (24.7%) of the raccoon hunters in the South Zone, but only 9.7% of those in the North Zone, were members of a local or state raccoon hunting club (Table 13). A regional difference was also evident for competitive raccoon hound hunting events: participation was 24.3% for South Zone hunters but only 9.3% for North Zone hunters.

I. Coyote Hunting Parties

Responses to this survey indicate there was an average of 3.3 hunters per coyote hunting party in Illinois in 1998-99 (Table 14). The parties harvested an average of 10.7 coyotes each during the season. Statewide, 26.6% of the parties took 0 coyotes, 37.2% took 1-5, 21.1% took 6-10, and 15.1% took ≥ 11 . The distribution of coyote harvest among parties was similar in the North and South Zones.

J. Attitudes and Opinions of Fur Hunters

Raccoon Season Dates. Majorities of the active raccoon hunters in the North Zone (59.8%), South Zone (61.1%), and statewide (60.2%) thought the opening dates for the raccoon hunting season were about right in 1998-99 (Table 15). Those who had other opinions were about evenly split as to whether the opening dates were too early or too late. Majorities (52.3%-54.4%) also thought the ending dates for the raccoon season were about right. However, those who disagreed were much more apt to think the ending dates were too early (31.9%-33.3%) than too late (6.4%-6.5%).

Use of Snares. A surprisingly large proportion of the active hunters did not voice an opinion as to whether the use of snares for land sets should be legal or illegal (Table 16). Of those who did express an opinion, majorities in the North Zone, South Zone, and statewide thought such sets should remain illegal.

Changes in Furbearer Populations. Participants were asked to provide input with regards to changes in furbearer populations from 1997-98 to 1998-99. Among the active hunters who expressed opinions, majorities or pluralities thought raccoon, opossum, and coyote numbers were up, and that red fox and gray fox numbers were down (Table 17). With minor exception, these assessments prevailed in both the North Zone and South Zone.

K. Some Characteristics of Fur Hunters

Statewide, the active fur hunters claimed to have hunted furbearers for an average of almost 20 years (Table 18). A surprisingly large segment (17.2%) had hunted ≥ 31 years. The proportion of active hunters who subscribed to publications varied from 1.5% for *Furtaker* to 21.8% for *Fur, Fish & Game*; 45.4% took 1 or more publications. One hunter in 6 (16.8%) took *Outdoor Illinois*.

L. Economics of Fur Hunting

The active fur hunters reported spending an average of \$458 for their sport for the 1998-99 season (Table 19). South Zone hunters spent an average of \$550, whereas North Zone Hunters spent less, \$408. The total statewide expenditure by fur hunters in Illinois in 1998-99 was estimated to be \$12.4 million.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The periodic Illinois Fur Hunter Survey probably realizes its best use and reliability for furbearer management as an

indicator of trends in hunting pressure, success, harvest, and recreation. The last periodic fur hunter survey was conducted following the 1992-93 season (Anderson and Campbell 1994). Beginning with the 1990-91 season, a survey entitled "Illinois Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey", was created. Because the mailing list for this survey was derived from purchasers of the Illinois Furbearer Stamp, it provided data for both fur hunters and fur trappers. The Fur Hunter/trapper Survey was conducted for the 1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93 seasons (Anderson and Campbell 1992, 1993, 1994).

The creation of the Illinois Habitat Stamp in 1993 was accompanied by a legislative mandate to discontinue the Illinois Furbearer Stamp after the 1992 season. The Habitat Stamp is required for most people who take or attempt to take any game species (including furbearers) in Illinois except waterfowl. Because of these changes, the Fur Hunter/Trapper Survey was replaced with 2 separate surveys: (1) the present periodic Fur Hunter Survey, which samples purchasers of the Habitat Stamp who indicate on the stamp stub that they hunted furbearers the previous year, and (2) the annual Furbearer Trapping survey, which samples purchasers of the resident trapping license.

The present survey indicates there were 26,992 active fur hunters in Illinois in 1998-99, and that they spent 537,162 days afield and harvested 406,936 furbearers (335,565 raccoons) (Table 3). The previous fur hunter survey produced estimates of 17,340 active hunters, 421,332 days afield, and 188,065 furbearers (141,588 raccoons) harvested in 1992-93 (Anderson and Campbell 1994). In making comparisons between these 2 surveys, a word of caution is advised. The 1998-99 estimates were based on the number of Illinois Habitat Stamps sold. These estimates may be inflated because some purchasers of the habitat stamp who claimed they hunted furbearers the previous year probably did not. In comparison, the 1992-93 estimates were based on the number of Illinois Furbearer Stamps sold. These estimates are low because at least 17% of the fur hunters did not purchase the furbearer stamp (Anderson and Campbell 1993). Nevertheless, the 2 surveys provide benchmark data that will become more valuable over time. The Illinois Fur Hunter Survey should be repeated at approximately 5-year intervals, using the same sampling strategy employed in 1998-99.

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DATA AND REPORTS:

Original data and reports for this study are on file in the Hunter Harvest and Human Dimensions Research Program offices, Natural Resources Studies Annex, Champaign, Illinois 61820.

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Hunter Harvest and Human Dimensions Research
Program

Illinois Natural History Survey

DATE: 13 April 2000

APPROVED BY: _____

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
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DATE: _____

11 June 2000

Table 1. Furbearer hunting seasons in Illinois, 1998-99 season.

Species	North Zone	South Zone
Raccoon, opossum	5 Nov - 25 Jan ^a (75) ^b	10 Nov - 30 Jan ^a (75)
Red fox, gray fox	10 Nov - 31 Jan ^a (76)	10 Nov - 31 Jan ^a (76)
Coyote, striped skunk	Year round ^a	Year round ^a

^aClosed during firearm deer season (November 20-22 and December 3-6), except coyotes could be taken by deer hunters with unfilled deer permits.

^bNumbers in parentheses are season lengths in days.

Table 2. Percentage of respondents to the 1998-99 Illinois Fur Hunter Survey who purchased a 1998 resident hunting license, trapping license, or habitat stamp, and the percentage who hunted furs in Illinois, 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

License, Stamps or Activity	All Respondents ^a	Active Fur Hunters ^a
	(3,371)	(1,974)
Resident hunting license	94.8	97.9
Resident trapping license	12.2	11.0
Habitat stamp	95.3	98.0
Hunted furbearers	58.6	100

^a All were residents.

Table 3. Summary of statewide data from post-season survey of fur hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=1,974).

Species	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Percent of Licensed Hunters	Estimated Number of Days Afield	Average Season Harvest	Estimated Total Harvest	Estimated Percent Sold	Estimated Total Sold
Raccoon	16,258	60.23	268,512	20.64	335,565	81.03	271,908
Opossum	1,764	6.53	18,884	5.98	10,549	18.81	1,984
Red fox	2,899	10.74	23,068	0.84	2,435	52.25	1,266
Coyote	16,162	59.88	202,755	3.54	57,213	19.38	11,088
Gray fox	834	3.09	6,851	0.54	450	24.24	109
Skunk	328	1.22	2,899	2.29	751	3.64	27
Canid chasing	697	2.58	14,193

Table 4. Summary of raccoon hunter and harvest data by furbearer management units in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1189).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Estimated Number of Active Hunters/100km ²	Estimated Number of Days Afield	Average Season Harvest*	Estimated Total Hunter Harvest	Estimated Hunter Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	2,024 (12.4)	21.53	27,484	26.68	53,986	574.38
Northeast Moraine	342 (2.1)	4.13	3,241	6.08	2,078	25.12
Mississippi Border-North	1,600 (9.8)	20.39	28,209	26.45	42,322	539.27
Mississippi Border-South	1,518 (9.3)	11.10	27,553	23.96	36,373	265.98
Western Prairie/Forest	2,447 (15.1)	16.97	32,475	16.32	39,956	277.07
Central Sand Prairie	260 (1.6)	6.27	2,995	14.63	3,801	91.66
Grand Prairie	4,265 (26.2)	8.10	61,983	17.59	75,058	142.62
Southern Plain	2,530 (15.6)	10.66	59,194	22.63	57,254	241.30
Wabash Border	629 (3.9)	9.33	14,125	26.17	16,464	244.20
Shawnee Hills	301 (1.9)	5.77	5,592	11.32	3,405	65.28
Unknown	342 (2.1)	..	5,661	..	4,868	..
Statewide	16,258 (100.0)	11.13	268,512	20.64	335,565	229.72

Table 5. Summary of coyote hunter and harvest data by furbearer management units in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1182).

Wildlife Management Unit	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Estimated Number of Active Hunters/100km ²	Estimated Number of Days Afield	Average Season Harvest*	Estimated Total Hunter Harvest	Estimated Hunter Harvest/100km ²
Northwest Hills	1,901 (11.8)	20.23	18,131	2.11	4,002	42.58
Northeast Moraine	588 (3.6)	7.11	9,626	3.05	1,789	21.63
Mississippi Border-North	1,258 (7.8)	16.03	20,853	6.39	8,031	102.33
Mississippi Border-South	1,053 (6.5)	7.70	16,121	3.29	3,455	25.27
Western Prairie/Forest	2,680 (16.6)	18.58	36,058	3.15	8,441	58.53
Central Sand Prairie	328 (2.0)	7.91	5,005	10.33	3,387	81.67
Grand Prairie	5,633 (34.9)	10.70	59,631	3.16	17,769	33.76
Southern Plain	1,737 (10.8)	7.32	24,558	3.83	6,638	27.98
Wabash Border	506 (3.1)	7.51	9,025	5.62	2,841	42.14
Shawnee Hills	314 (1.9)	6.02	3,077	2.26	710	13.61
Unknown	164 (1.0)	...	670	...	150	...
Statewide	16,162 (100.0)	11.06	202,755	3.54	57,213	39.17

Table 6. Statewide sample sizes for post-season mail survey of resident fur hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=1,974).

Species	Number of Active Hunters In Sample	Percent Active Hunters	Season Harvest by Hunters Sampled
Raccoon	1,189	60.23	24,540
Opossum	129	6.53	771
Red fox	212	10.74	178
Coyote	1,182	59.88	4,189
Gray fox	61	3.09	33
Skunk	24	1.22	55
Canid chasing	51	2.58	..

Table 7. Confidence intervals (95%) for estimated number of active fur hunters, average season harvest, and total hunter harvest by species in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1974).

Species	Estimated Number Of Active Hunters	Average Season Harvest	Estimated Total Harvest
Raccoon	16,258 \pm 595	20.64 \pm 1.58	335,565 \pm 29,076
Opossum	1,764 \pm 300	5.98 \pm 2.00	10,549 \pm 4,107
Red fox	2,899 \pm 376	0.84 \pm 0.29	2,435 \pm 1,081
Coyote	16,162 \pm 596	3.54 \pm 0.20	57,213 \pm 9,064
Gray fox	834 \pm 210	0.54 \pm 0.44	450 \pm 389
Skunk	328 \pm 133	2.29 \pm 1.74	751 \pm 717
Canid chasing	697 \pm 193

Table 8. Distribution of furbearer harvest among active hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Total Season Harvest	Percentage of Active Hunters					
	Raccoon (1,189)	Opossum (129)	Red fox (212)	Coyote (1,182)	Gray fox (61)	Striped skunk (24)
0	12.9	17.1	64.2	36.5	82.0	29.2
1	4.6	20.2	20.3	18.8	11.5	37.5
2	6.7	12.4	7.5	13.8	0.0	16.7
3	5.6	10.9	1.9	6.9	0.0	4.2
4	4.0	5.4	2.4	4.1	3.3	0.0
5	3.8	6.2	2.4	3.4	0.0	4.2
6	3.2	1.6	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0
7	1.9	3.1	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0
8	3.1	3.1	0.0	2.0	1.6	0.0
9	1.2	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0
10	6.0	7.8	0.0	1.6	1.6	4.2
11	0.8	1.6	0.0	0.8	..	0.0
12	2.0	1.6	0.0	1.0	..	0.0
13	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.3	..	0.0
14	0.8	0.0	0.5	0.3	..	0.0
15	3.2	2.3	0.0	1.3	..	0.0
16-20	8.5	1.6	0.0	1.2	..	4.2
21-25	5.1	1.6	0.5	1.3	..	0.0
>25	26.2	3.1	0.0	1.3	..	0.0

Table 9. Summary of raccoon hunter and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1189).

Area	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Estimated Number of Active Hunters/100km ²	Estimated Number of Days Afield	Average Season Harvest ^a	Estimated Total Hunter Harvest	Estimated Hunter Harvest/100km ²
North Zone	9,872 (60.7)	12.06	139,144	20.03±2.06	197,784	241.68
South Zone	6,044 (37.2)	9.41	123,707	21.99±2.56	132,913	206.90
Unknown	342 (2.1)	..	5,661	..	4,868	..
Statewide	16,258 (100.0)	11.13	268,512	20.64±1.58	335,565	229.72

^a± 95% confidence interval.

Table 10. Summary of coyote hunter and harvest data by furbearer management zones in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1182).

Area	Estimated Number of Active Hunters	Estimated Number of Active Hunters/100km ²	Estimated Number of Days Afield	Average Season Harvest ^a	Estimated Total Hunter Harvest	Estimated Hunter Harvest/100km ²
North Zone	11,158 (69.0)	13.63	131,063	3.39±0.69	37,833	46.23
South Zone	4,840 (30.0)	7.53	71,022	3.98±0.42	19,230	29.94
Unknown	164 (1.0)	..	670	..	150	..
Statewide	16,162 (100.0)	11.06	202,755	3.54±0.20	57,213	39.17

^a± 95% confidence interval.

Table 11. Distribution of pelts sold by fur hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season, based on post-season mail survey (n=1974).

Species	Pelts Sold		Total Sold	Pelts Not Sold
	In Illinois	Outside Illinois		
Raccoon	243,901 (72.7) ^a	28,007 (8.3)	271,908 (81.0)	63,657 (19.0)
Opossum	1,889 (17.9)	95 (0.9)	1,984 (18.8)	8,565 (81.2)
Red fox	1,252 (51.4)	14 (0.6)	1,266 (52.0)	1,169 (48.0)
Coyote	10,323 (18.1)	765 (1.3)	11,088 (19.4)	46,125 (80.6)
Gray fox	109 (24.2)	0 (0.0)	109 (24.2)	341 (75.8)
Skunk	27 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	27 (3.6)	724 (96.4)

^aPercentage of harvest.

Table 12. Percentage of fur hunters who used furbearer meat or other furbearer products in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=1,797).

Activity	Percentage
Fed furbearer meat to pets	4.8
Used furbearer meat for other purposes (wild game dinner, etc.)	15.0
Sold furbearer meat	0.6
Sold furbearer products other than pelts or meat (i.e., scent glands, skulls, etc.)	0.6
Total	16.3

Table 13. Some hunting characteristics of raccoon hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Characteristic	North Zone	South Zone	Entire State ^a
Mean hunters per party	(718) 2.2	(439) 2.2	(1,162) 2.2 ^b
Own raccoon hounds	(721) 38.6%	(440) 71.1%	(1,169) 50.9%
Mean hounds per owner	(275) 2.2	(314) 2.3	(595) 2.3 ^c
Methods of hunting	(703)	(435)	(1,144)
With dogs	51.2%	87.3%	65.0%
Mouth-blown or electronic predator call	3.3	3.7	3.4
On foot and using a light (without dogs or predator calls)	45.5	9.0	31.6
Member of local or state raccoon hunting club	(721) 9.7%	(441) 24.7%	(1,170) 15.4%
Participated in competitive raccoon hound hunting events	(721) 9.3%	(440) 24.3%	(1,169) 15.1%

^aIncludes a few hunters who were not identified as to zone.

^b18.4% included 1 hunter, 52.0% included 2 hunters, 22.6% included 3 hunters, and 7.0% included 4-10 hunters.

^c38.3% owned 1 hound, 32.2% owned 2 hounds, 13.7% owned 3 hounds, and 15.8% owned 4-12 hounds.

Table 14. The number of hunters in coyote hunting parties and the number of coyotes harvested by the parties in Illinois, 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Characteristic		North Zone	South Zone	Entire State ^a
Hunters per party		(814)	(353)	(1,168)
Mean		3.1	3.6	3.3
Distribution:	1 hunter(s)	26.4%	25.2%	26.0%
	2 "	35.4	34.6	35.1
	3 "	11.2	10.2	10.9
	4 "	7.4	4.8	6.6
	5 "	5.4	4.0	5.0
	6-10 "	12.0	15.8	13.2
	11-15 "	1.5	4.3	2.3
	16-20 "	0.6	0.1	0.8
	≥21 "	0.1	0.0	0.1
Coyotes harvested per party		(816)	(354)	(1,182)
Mean		10.0	12.7	10.7
Distribution:	0 coyote(s)	26.2%	25.4%	26.6%
	1 "	13.6	9.9	12.4
	2 "	9.8	7.1	8.9
	3 "	6.9	7.9	7.1
	4 "	3.9	4.8	4.1
	5 "	4.8	4.8	4.7
	6-10 "	10.3	8.2	9.6
	11-15 "	7.1	6.8	7.1
	16-20 "	3.8	6.2	4.4
	≥21 "	13.6	18.9	15.1

^aIncludes a few hunters who were not identified as to zone.

Table 15. Attitudes of raccoon hunters toward the opening and closing dates for the 1998-99 raccoon hunting season in Illinois. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the questions:

*The 1998-99 raccoon hunting season opened on November 5 in the northern zone and on November 10 in the southern zone. In your opinion, are these opening dates:

	North Zone (721)	South Zone (442)	Entire State ^a (1,167)
About right	59.8%	61.1%	60.2%
Too early	12.1	17.4	14.1
Too late	18.2	15.2	17.1
No opinion	9.9	6.3	8.6

*The 1998-99 Illinois raccoon hunting season ended on January 25 in the North Zone and on January 30 in the South Zone. In your opinion, are those closing dates:

	(718)	(439)	(1,164)
About right	52.3%	54.4%	53.0%
Too early	31.9	33.3	32.5
Too late	6.5	6.4	6.5
No opinion	9.3	5.9	8.0

^aIncludes a few hunters who were not identified as to zone.

Table 16. Attitudes of fur hunters toward the use of snares for trapping furbearers in Illinois, 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Responses to the question:

*Certain types of snares were legalized for water-set trapping in Illinois beginning in 1990.
What is your attitude toward the legalization of snares for LAND sets in Illinois?

	North <u>Zone</u> (1,217)	South <u>Zone</u> (659)	Entire <u>State</u> (1,876)
All trappers should be allowed to use snares for LAND sets	27.2%	16.5%	23.5%
All LAND snaring for furbearers should remain illegal	34.6	49.2	39.7
Don't know/undecided	38.2	34.3	36.8

Table 17. Assessments of active fur hunters as to changes in furbearer populations in Illinois from 1997-98 season to 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Zone and Species		Percentage of Hunters			
		Up	Unchanged	Down	Don't know
North					
Raccoon	(1,219)	44.2	28.9	12.1	14.8
Opossum	(1,102)	39.2	25.3	3.9	31.6
Red fox	(1,099)	16.8	21.1	28.8	33.3
Gray fox	(1,071)	2.5	13.0	23.5	61.0
Coyote	(1,172)	62.2	19.8	7.0	11.0
South					
Raccoon	(643)	39.8	31.1	15.6	13.5
Opossum	(573)	49.0	23.2	4.2	23.6
Red fox	(559)	20.0	25.2	21.6	33.2
Gray fox	(555)	5.8	21.3	25.9	47.0
Coyote	(611)	54.2	23.9	8.2	13.7
Entire State					
Raccoon	(1,862)	42.8	29.6	13.3	14.3
Opossum	(1,675)	42.6	24.6	4.0	28.8
Red fox	(1,658)	17.9	22.5	26.4	33.2
Gray fox	(1,626)	3.6	15.8	24.4	56.2
Coyote	(1,783)	59.5	21.2	7.4	11.9

Table 18. Number of years that Illinois fur hunters have hunted furbearers and subscriptions to publications they received, 1998-99 season. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Characteristic	North Zone	South Zone	Entire State
Mean years hunted furbearers	(1,233) 19.1	(664) 21.0	(1,897) 19.8 ^a
Subscriptions to publications	(1,281)	(693)	(1,974)
American Cooner	6.9%	17.0%	10.4%
Coonhound Bloodlines	6.3	13.6	8.9
Full Cry	5.7	7.6	6.4
Trapper and Predator Caller	7.9	6.2	7.3
American Trapper	3.6	2.3	3.1
Fur, Fish & Game	22.6	20.3	21.8
Furtaker	7.6	1.2	1.5
Outdoor Highlights	18.3	13.9	16.8
Total	43.8	48.3	45.4

^a15.6% had hunted 1-5 years, 16.6% had hunted 6-10 years, 13.2% had hunted 11-15 years, 16.9% had hunted 16-20 years, 10.0% had hunted 21-25 years, 10.7% had hunted 26-30 years, and 17.2% had hunted ≥ 31 years.

Table 19. Estimated expenditures by active resident fur hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season.
Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Money Spent	Percentage of Hunters		
	North Zone	South Zone	Entire State
	(1,259)	(686)	(1,945)
\$0 - \$50	16.5	14.1	15.7
\$51 - \$100	18.0	11.8	15.8
\$101 - \$200	14.7	10.9	13.4
\$201 - \$500	23.8	24.1	23.5
\$501 - \$1,000	16.8	20.0	17.9
>\$1000	10.7	19.1	13.7
Mean	\$408	\$550	\$458
Total ^a (millions)	\$7.2	\$5.2	\$12.4

^aBased on an estimated 26,692 active resident fur hunters in Illinois during the 1998-99 season.

Habitat Stamp ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES 1997 197112

Name	County of Residence	*Check species hunted last season <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit <input type="checkbox"/> Quail <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasant <input type="checkbox"/> Squirrels <input type="checkbox"/> Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> Deer <input type="checkbox"/> Doves <input type="checkbox"/> Groundhog <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above
Address	City, State & Zip Code	
Signature of Applicant	Date	

(This Stub To Be Returned To Department)

Habitat Stamp ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES 1997 197113

Name	County of Residence	*Check species hunted last season <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit <input type="checkbox"/> Quail <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasant <input type="checkbox"/> Squirrels <input type="checkbox"/> Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> Deer <input type="checkbox"/> Doves <input type="checkbox"/> Groundhog <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above
Address	City, State & Zip Code	
Signature of Applicant	Date	

(This Stub To Be Returned To Department)

Figure 1. The stubs that were attached to the 1997 Illinois Habitat Stamps.



To properly manage the furbearer populations of Illinois, the Department of Natural Resources needs information about fur hunters in the state.

Please fill out the questionnaire on the following pages for YOUR PERSONAL FURBEARER HUNTING activities in Illinois during the 1998-99 season. If you receive another questionnaire for trapping only, please fill it out too.

If you did not hunt furbearers in Illinois during the 1998-99 season, answer only the questions in PART 1 and PART 5. Your background and opinions are important even if you did not hunt.

The questionnaire is divided into five parts: General Information, Furbearer Hunting, Raccoon Hunting, Coyote Hunting, and Background Information/Opinions.

If you can't remember exact figures, give your best estimate.

When completed, insert questionnaire into the pre-addressed envelope and drop in mail. POSTAGE IS PREPAID FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR RESPONSES ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and will never be associated with your name. Since you are part of a small, randomly selected group, your participation is extremely important.

Your comments are welcome, but please write them on a separate sheet of paper to receive proper attention.

PART 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Did you purchase an Illinois resident hunting license (i.e., regular hunting license, Sportsman's combination hunting/fishing license, or senior citizen hunting license) for the 1998 season? (circle number for appropriate answer)
- Yes.....1 No.....2
2. Did you purchase a 1998 Illinois Habitat Stamp for your personal use?
- Yes.....1 No.....2
3. Did you purchase a 1998 Illinois resident trapping license?
- Yes.....1 No.....2

Figure 2. The questionnaire used to conduct the 1998-99 Illinois Fur Hunter Survey (continued).

4. Did you HUNT furbearers IN ILLINOIS during the 1998-99 season?
(circle number for appropriate answer)

Yes.....1

No.....2

If "YES", continue with PART 2, QUESTION 5. If "NO", SKIP TO PART 5 and continue with QUESTION 18.

PART 2 - FURBEARER HUNTING

5. Fill in all FIVE BLANKS for each kind of furbearer you HUNTED IN ILLINOIS during the 1998-99 season. If you hunted both raccoons and opossums at the same time, count the day toward your primary target--that is, primarily raccoons or primarily opossums. If you hunted both red foxes and coyotes at the same time, count the day toward your primary target--that is, primarily red foxes or primarily coyotes. Report only your personal kill. DO NOT report the kill of others with whom you may have hunted. DO NOT report animals harvested with traps.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number of DAYS Hunted</u>	<u>Number KILLED</u>	<u>Number SOLD in Illinois</u>	<u>Number SOLD Out of State</u>	<u>Number NOT SOLD</u>
Raccoon	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Opossum	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Red fox	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Coyote	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Gray fox	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Skunk	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fox and coyote chasing to kill	_____	with dogs for sport N/A	only and not N/A	N/A	N/A

6. Please indicate whether you participated in any of the following activities within the last year. (circle appropriate answer for each activity)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
a. Did you use furbearer meat to feed pets?.....	1	2
b. Did you use any furbearer meat for other purposes (wild game dinner, etc.)?.....	1	2
c. Did you sell any furbearer meat?.....	1	2
d. Did you sell any furbearer products other than pelts or meat? (such as scent glands, skulls, etc.).....	1	2
e. Did you hunt nuisance or problem animals as a service to other people such as family, neighbors or friends?.....	1	2

PART 3 - RACCOON HUNTING

PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 7 THROUGH 14 if you hunted raccoons during the 1998-99 season. If you didn't hunt raccoons, skip to PART 4, QUESTION 15.

7. In which COUNTY did you hunt raccoons most in 1998-99?

_____ County, Illinois

8. Including yourself, what was the most common number of people in your raccoon hunting party in 1998-99?.....
9. Do you personally own any raccoon hounds? (circle number for appropriate answer)
 Yes.....1 No.....2
- 9a. If "YES", how many hounds?.....
10. Which of the following methods do you use most often to hunt raccoons? (circle number for appropriate answer)
- I always or nearly always hunt with dogs.....1
 I always or nearly always hunt using a mouth-blown or electronic predator call.....2
 I always or nearly always hunt on foot and use a light to locate raccoons without the aid of dogs or predator calls.....3
11. Are you currently a member of a local or state raccoon hunting club or organization such as Illinois State Coonhunters Association? (circle number for appropriate answer)
 Yes.....1 No.....2
12. Did you participate in any competitive raccoon hound hunting events such as those licensed by the ACHA, PKC, UKC, or AKC during the last 12 months? (circle number for appropriate answer)
 Yes.....1 No.....2
13. The 1998-99 raccoon hunting season opened on November 5 in the northern zone and on November 10 in the southern zone. In your opinion, are these opening dates: (circle number that best represents your opinion)
 About right?...1 Too early?...2 Too late?...3 No opinion...4
14. The 1998-99 Illinois raccoon hunting season ended on January 25 in the North Zone and on January 30 in the South Zone. In your opinion, are those closing dates: (circle number that best represents your opinion)
 About right?...1 Too early?...2 Too late?...3 No opinion...4

PART 4 - COYOTE HUNTING

PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 15 THROUGH 18 if you hunted coyotes during the 1998-99 season. If you didn't hunt coyotes, skip to PART 5, QUESTION 17.

15. In which COUNTY did you hunt coyotes the most?
 _____ County, Illinois
16. Including yourself, what was the most common number of people in your coyote hunting party in 1998-99?.....

17. What was the TOTAL number of coyotes killed by everyone in your hunting party in 1998-99?

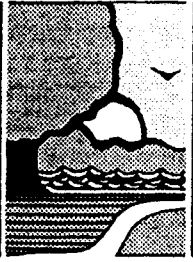
Total coyotes killed by party..._____

PART 5 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPINIONS

18. Including the 1998-99 season, how many years have you hunted furbearers?....._____years
19. Do you buy or subscribe to any of the following publications? (circle numbers of all that apply)
- a. American Cooner.....1
 - b. Coonhound Bloodlines.....2
 - c. Full Cry.....3
 - d. Trapper and Predator Caller.....4
 - e. American Trapper.....5
 - f. Fur, Fish and Game.....6
 - g. Fur Taker.....7
 - h. Outdoor Illinois (published by Illinois DNR).....8
20. We would like an estimate of your furbearer hunting expenses in Illinois during the 1998-99 season. Please include money spent on clothing, new firearms, ammo, transportation, hunting dogs and their keep, predator calls, equipment like snowshoes or special lights, and licenses, etc. (circle number for appropriate answer)
- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| \$0-\$50.....1 | \$51-\$100.....2 | \$101-\$200.....3 |
| \$201-\$500....4 | \$501-\$1,000...5 | Over \$1,000....6 |
21. Certain types of snares were legalized for water-set trapping in Illinois beginning in 1990. What is your attitude toward the legalization of snares for LAND sets in Illinois? (circle number for appropriate answer)
- All trappers should be allowed to use snares for LAND sets..1
 - All LAND snaring for furbearers should remain illegal.....2
 - Don't know or undecided.....3
22. Compared to 1997-98 (last season), were the populations of the following furbearers up, unchanged, or down during 1998-99 (this season)? (express your opinion by circling the appropriate number for each species)

<u>Species</u>	<u>Up</u>	<u>Unchanged</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Raccoon.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Opossum.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Red fox.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Gray fox.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4
Coyote.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION
POSTAGE IS PREPAID



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor • Brent Manning, Director

Dear Illinois Fur Hunter:

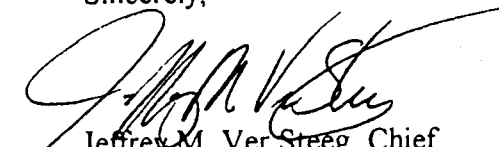
The harvest of fur-bearing animals is one of the few outdoor sports that is tied to our economy through a return from the crop. During the 1997-98 season, Illinois fur-takers sold 378,337 pelts worth \$3,324,594. We need information on the hunted portion of the catch for the 1998-99 season.

You can make an important contribution to the future management of Illinois' fur harvests and hunting activities by completing the enclosed questionnaire. The questionnaire is self-explanatory. Please read the questionnaire and answer all questions that apply to you.

The information you provide will be used to determine harvest, hunting success, hunting pressure, and hunter characteristics on a statewide basis. We collect this information to gain a better understanding of how regulations affect your hunting activities and the welfare of furbearer populations.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire. If you do not remember exact figures, please give your best estimate. If you hunted with one or more other persons, list only the furbearers you personally killed. Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail in the envelope provided; no postage is required. Please reply even if you did not hunt this season, or you were not successful.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

P.S. Please take a look at the back of this letter if you would like to learn more about furbearer conservation or help insure that future generations have an opportunity to enjoy fur hunting and trapping in our State.

Figure 3. The letter that accompanied the first mailing of the questionnaire.

Each year, the Illinois State Furbearer Fund receives 6% or a minimum of \$100,000 from the sale of Habitat Stamps to hunters and trappers. A portion of this money (45%) is used for programs that help explain the need for hunting and trapping as tools in wildlife conservation. Several products are available:

- A **website** about furbearer ecology and conservation can be accessed at <http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/dnr/fur/>. The site contains:
 - detailed life history information about all 14 species classified as furbearers in Illinois
 - common questions about fur hunting and trapping
 - a section on the role of fur hunting and trapping in wildlife conservation
 - resources and references
 - links to related websites
- A **VHS video**, "Fur Hunting and Trapping in Illinois"
- A 15-page **brochure**, "Fur Hunting and Trapping and what they mean to the people and wildlife of Illinois"

The video and brochure are **free for Illinois residents**. You can order them (maximum of one video per person) from Illinois DNR-Wildlife Resources, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787, ATTN: Furbearer Program Manager. For a quick response, send your request separately from your answers to the questionnaire (orders sent in the same envelope as your questionnaire will be processed in May when we receive them from our data entry unit).

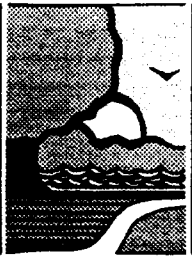
All we ask is that you share these resources with people who don't hunt or trap. Some ideas include:

- passing them on to friends and acquaintances
- giving a talk at your child's school, or a Kiwanis or Rotary meeting in your community
- helping your child prepare for a report or presentation at school
- donating the video to a local or school library

We're doing our best to put these resources to good use and hope you'll do the same. As a fur hunter, you're a credible source of information about this activity and have a real advantage when it comes to influencing the perceptions of people you know.



Figure 4. Information printed on the back of the letter that accompanied the first mailing of the questionnaire.



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Illinois Fur Hunter:

We recently mailed you a Fur Hunter Survey questionnaire and requested that you fill out and return the completed form. We have not received your form at this time - perhaps because you have misplaced the questionnaire or haven't found time to complete it and return it to us.

We are enclosing another questionnaire which we hope you will complete and return as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please destroy this one. The information supplied by you and other hunters helps the Department of Natural Resources to better manage Illinois' fur resources and maximize harvest opportunities.

Please fill out the form completely and return it even if you did not hunt, or you were not successful. If you hunted with one or more other persons, list only the furbearers you personally killed. No postage is required to return the completed questionnaire. Just fill it out, place it in the envelope provided, and drop it in the mail.

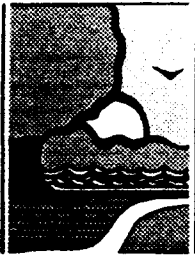
Your prompt attention will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:GH:gh
Enc.

FH2-98/99



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

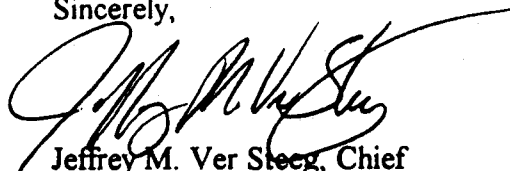
Dear Illinois Fur Hunter:

This is to remind you that we would still like to receive an answer to the questionnaire concerning your hunting of furbearers this past season. We don't like to keep bothering you, but this is important information which only you can supply.

Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. We hope you will complete and return it as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, simply destroy this one. We are making a final effort to obtain a complete response so that we may compile the information received from all cooperating hunters and prepare a report of our findings. Remember, your response is needed - even though you did not hunt, or you had an unsuccessful season. If you hunted with one or more other persons, list only the furbearers you personally killed.

No postage is required to return the completed questionnaire. Just fill it out, place it in the envelope provided, and drop it in the mail. Please help us complete this survey by sending it in now!

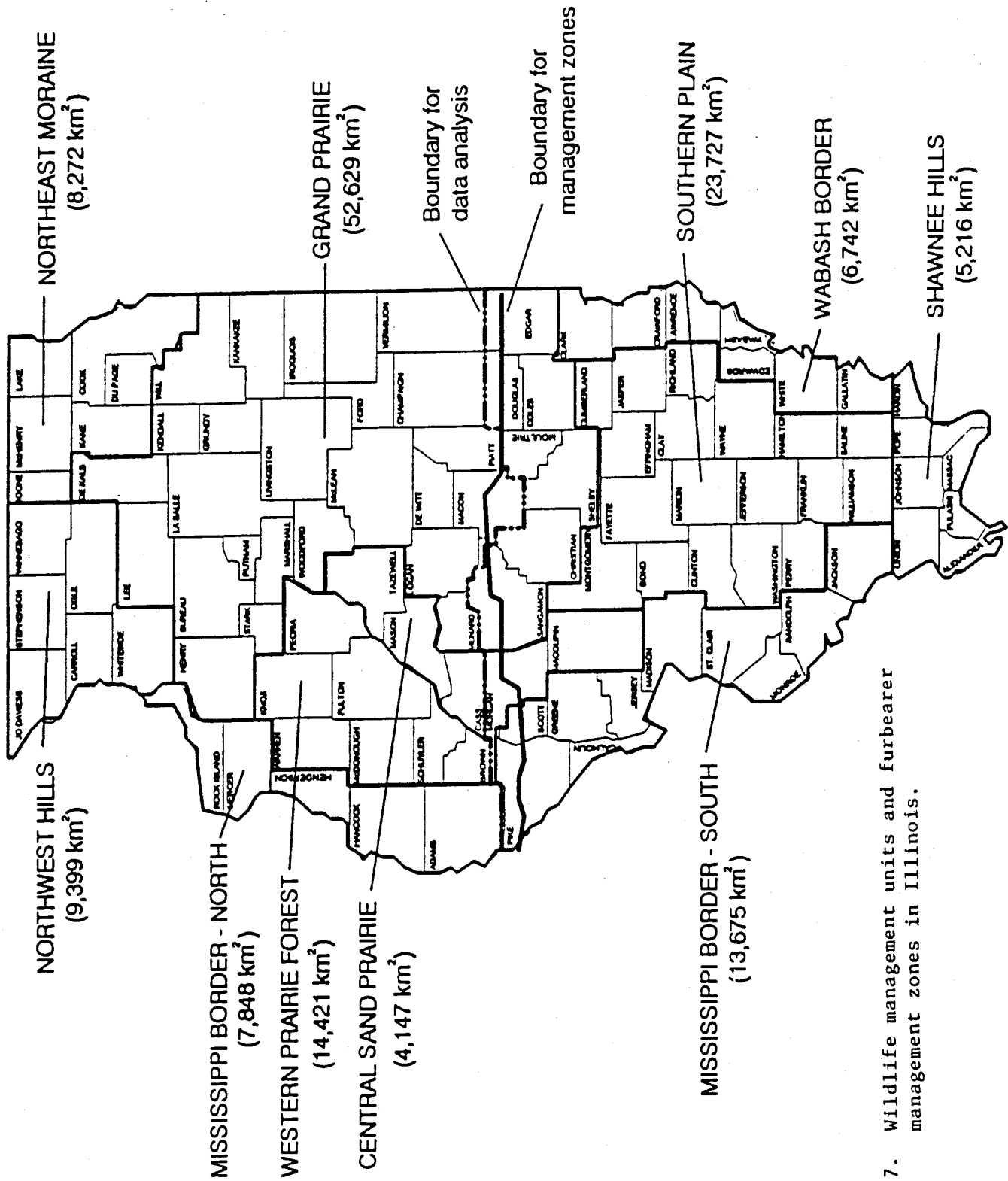
Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:GH:gh
Enc.

FH3-98/99



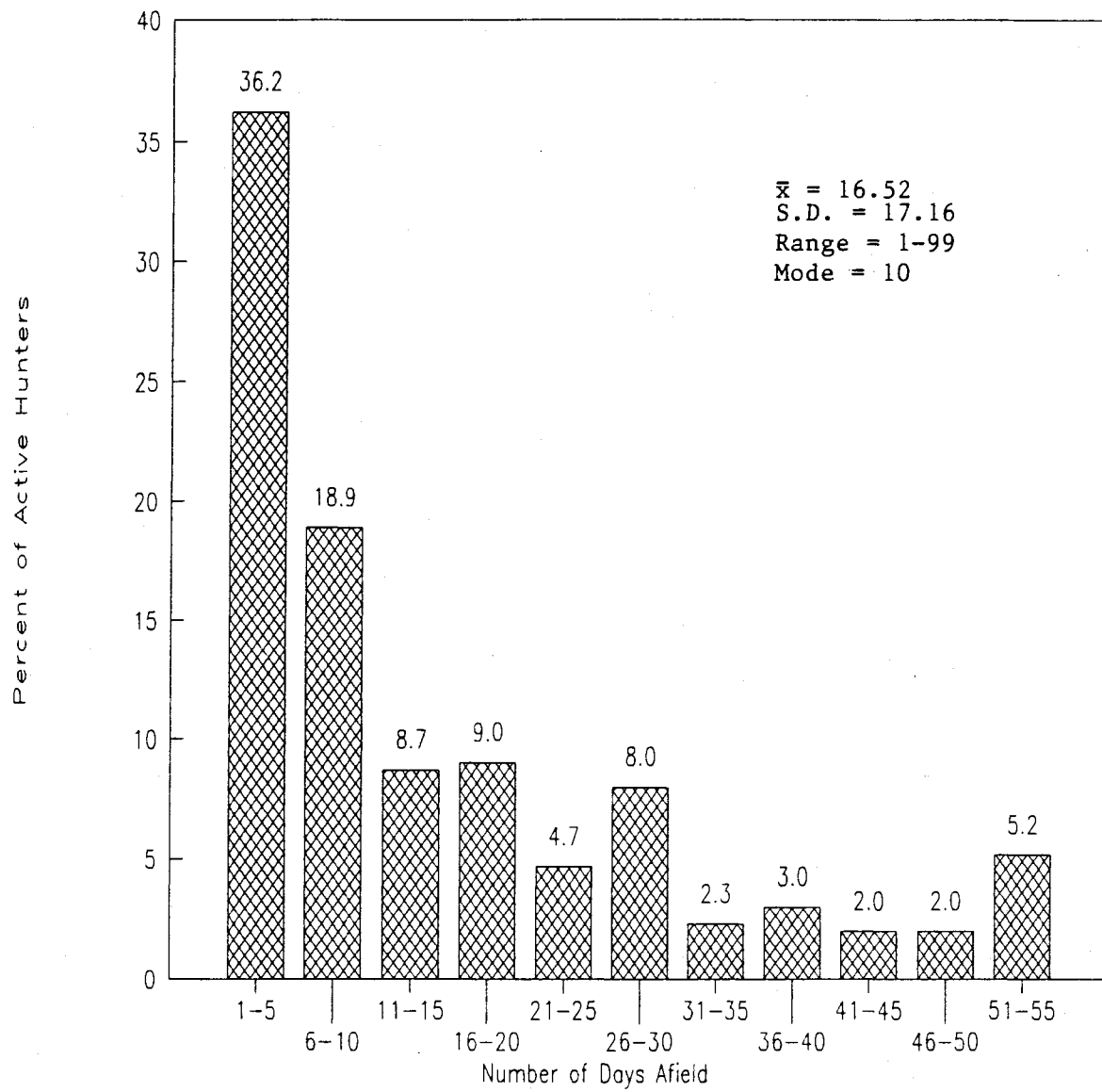


Figure 8. Distribution of days afield by active raccoon hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=1,189).

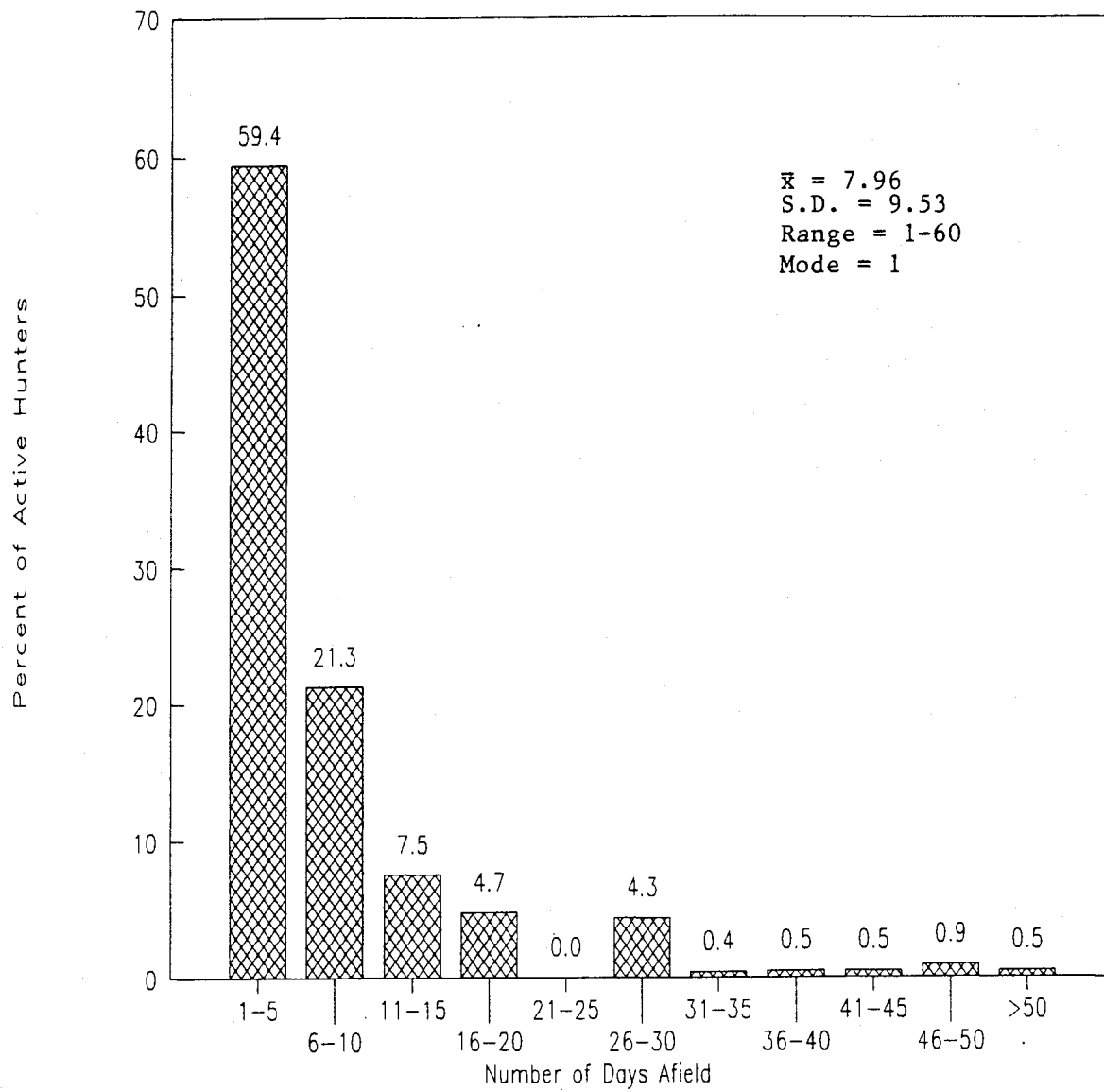


Figure 9. Distribution of days afield by active red fox hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=212).

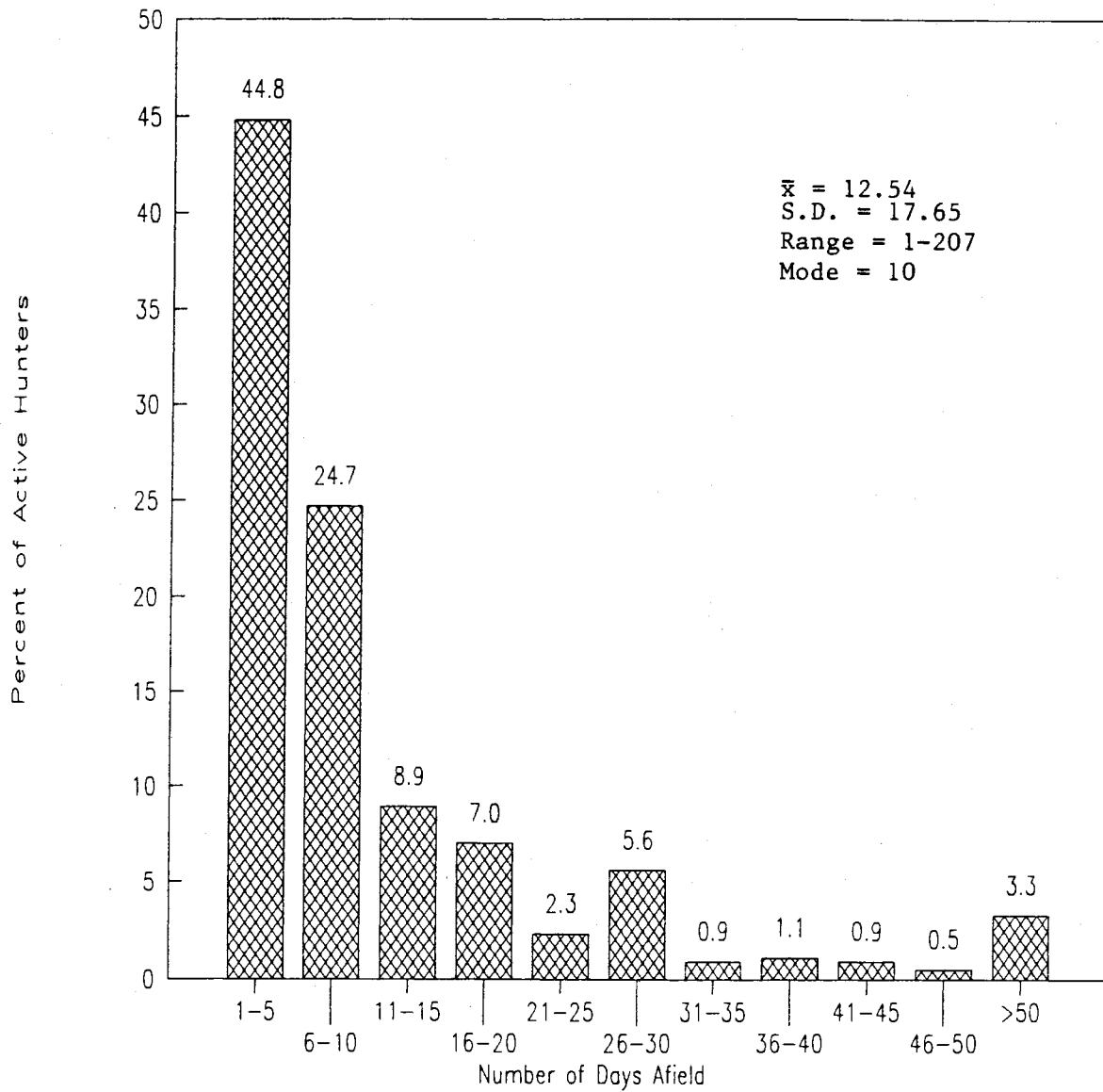


Figure 10. Distribution of days afield by active coyote hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=1,182).

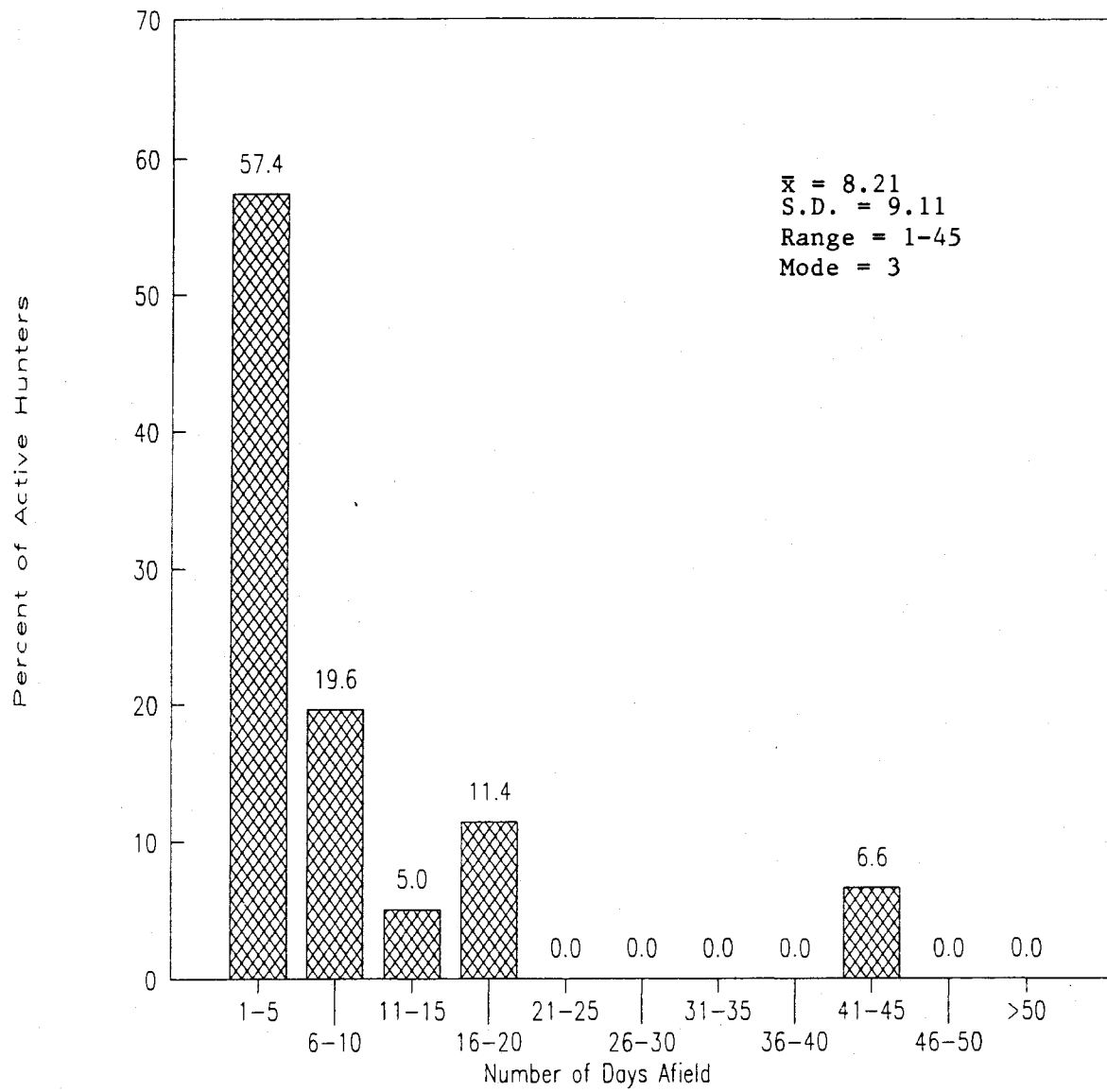


Figure 11. Distribution of days afield by active gray fox hunters in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=61).

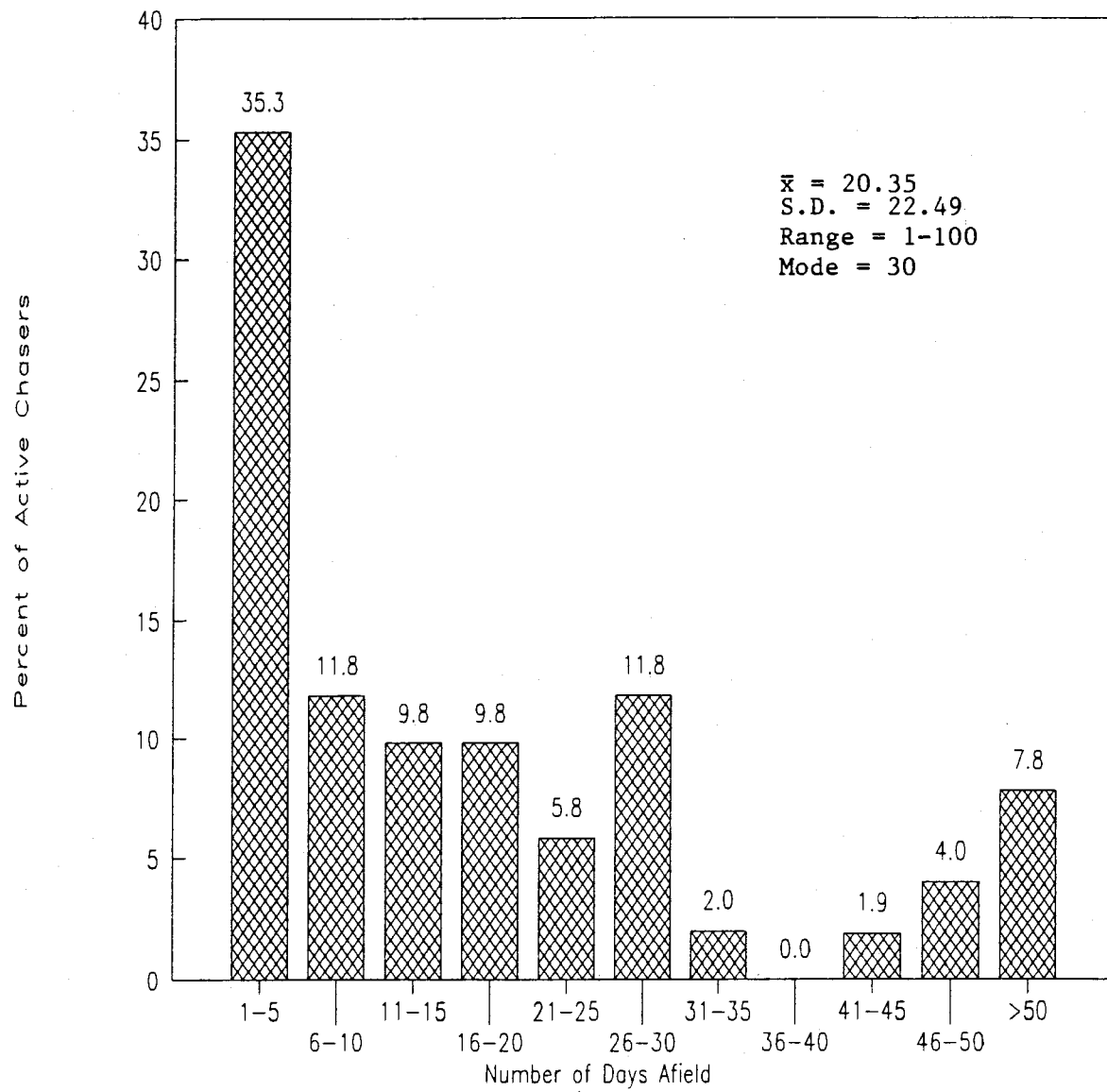


Figure 12. Distribution of days afield by active wild canid chasers in Illinois, 1998-99 season (n=51).

